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TWO PLEASANT OCCUPATIONS. — AFTER RUDAU.

## ABOUT WEEDS.

WHAT is a weed? Generally speaking, it is any plant that interferes with the operations of agriculture or of gardening. Some plants are weeds, because by their rapid growth and superabundance they choke out the more useful vegetables; others are so simply from their unsightly appearance and their want of utility. There is never a question in any one's mind as to whether the goosefoot, or pigweed, is a weed or not. Its rank and homely growth, its inconspicuous flowers, and its limited uses, at once discard it from the catalogue of valued plants. So is it with the burdock (*Lappa officinalis*), although it has elements of beauty which redeem it. Its large, crumpled leaves spring up in odd corners of yards, about houses, or on dust-heaps where little else would grow, and cover unsightly objects. The flowers are very pretty, as all children know who have woven them into mats.

A plant which is a weed and troublesome in one place, need not be so in another. It may have flourished to the exclusion of all else in one locality, but if removed to another may become restricted in numbers and be considered simply useless, but no longer a pest. Some of the worst weeds we have are aliens. The ox-eye daisy comes to us from Europe, and some English weeds are quite supplanting the native flora of New Zealand and Australia.

Weeds are variously interesting, according as they are viewed. If we keep a garden, we will find the purslane (*Portulaca oleracen*) an undeniable nuisance, and approaching it as an enemy, will find it a vigorous opponent; but if we seek it as a friend, it, together with most other weeds, will reveal to us beauties of which we had no conception. We have already spoken of the beauty of the daisy and the burdock, but let us look at some of the smaller flowers, like those of the dead-nettle (*Lamium amplexi-*

*caule*), the motherwort (*Leonurus cardiaca*), and the germander (*Teucrium*), and we will find them as attractive when once our attention is called to them, as any of the larger flowers which society agrees to praise.

The little speedwell, or Veronica, which we often find on grass-plats, has a most bewitching flower, which most persons would fail to observe. The corolla is white, and veined with the most delicate pencillings of violet, all pointing toward the centre of the flower, so that this humble weed can give us beauty and information at the same time. Its beauty is evident to any observer; but what does it teach? We have said that the colored veinlets all pointed to the centre of the flower; and this is true of all flowers where such veins occur, as shown by Sprengel, who claimed that they serve as guides to the insect seeking nectar. Recent observations have proved his theory to be correct.



THE FORTUNATE MOMENT.—AFTER RUDAUX.

There is no more desirable ground for the young city botanist than the waste-places and open lots. Here he will find any number of plants with which it is well to become familiar. They can do no harm where they are, except perhaps by circulating their seed; and they are so little regarded by disdainful man, that he can claim the whole collection as his own.

Side by side with our English weeds we will sometimes find the prince's-feather (*Polygonum orientale*), the canary-grass (*Phalaris Canariensis*), and other exotics. As the summer advances there will be a perfect tangle of weeds in such a place, evening-primroses, cockle-burrs, lychnises, melilots, canterbury-bells, amaranths, and many other plants, some showy, others merely coarse and offensive.

To those who can not take long walks and who yet are interested in nature, we commend these botanical gardens. They will find a great number of families

represented, a great many plans of growth illustrated; many beautiful blossoms and delicious odors to reward them. Moral reflections without end will be suggested. They will learn to respect a weed and reverence the Great Designer who has placed the impress of beauty not only on the giant water-lily of Brazil or the aged red-woods of California, but on these "tiny flecks of flowers" which only our careful attention will discover. — W. W. Bailey.

#### OUT-OF-DOORS LOVE-MAKING.

THE artists naturally never tire of depicting the movements connected with the tender passion, just as (let the truth be told!) the love-makers themselves seem to be never tired of affording them subjects for the pencil. In the present issue we have two most charming illustrations of the theme, after Rudaux, whose "Chance Meeting" and "First Visit," in the

number of *THE ALDINE* for November, 1873, will be remembered by those so fortunate as to have procured them. In the present pair of companion pictures, affairs have progressed much further and very satisfactorily. In "Two Pleasant Occupations" the young artist-sportsman is lazily handling his rod, over a quiet pool, while the lady is playing him a little, in expectation of the momentous question. But in "The Fortunate Moment" the entire story is told and the pleasant idyl concluded. That the whole heart of the young man is in his eager gaze and action, as he cranes over the fence to force a glance at the face coyly half hidden from him, there can be no question whatever; and the sweet lips forming a notable part of that blushing and love-lit face, are undoubtedly framing a "yes" that in a moment more will be timidly uttered, thus sealing the future fate of two lives for the happiness that we hope for or the misery that we must fear.